

ELECTION OF SPECIES REQUIREMENT

The Examiner has set forth an election of species requirement with regard to the present application. The grouping of the claims is set forth as follows:

Group a Figures 16-20

Claims readable on this Species: 1-14

Group b Figures 22 and 23

Claims readable on this Species: 1-3, 5-9 and 11-14

Applicant hereby elects the species of Group a consisting of Figures 16-20 for initial examination. As set forth in the Examiner's Election of Species Requirement, claims 1, 7, 13 and 14 are generic to the two species. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-14 are readable on the elected species. This election is with traverse.

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-14 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his election of species requirement in view of the remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

In order to be responsive to the Examiner's election of species requirement, Applicant has elected the species of Group a for initial examination. Applicant hereby elects claims 1-14 for initial examination. As indicated by the Examiner, claims 1, 7, 13 and 14 are generic to the two species of the present application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to act on the elected claims.

The provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.146 state that a reasonable number of species are permitted in a single application. The present application contains two species. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's election of species requirement is improper in view of the fact that generic claims 1, 7, 13 and 14 are allowable and thus a reasonable number of species are set forth in the present application.

In order to be responsive to the Examiner's election of species requirement, claims 1-14 have been initially elected. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his election of species requirement and act on all of the claims in the present application. If the Examiner does persist in his election of species requirement, Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application with claims directed to Figs. 22 and 23 at a later date if they so desire.

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CLAIM FOR PRIORITY

The Examiner has not recognized the Applicant's claim for foreign priority. The Examiner is respectfully requested to recognize Applicant's claim for priority in the next Office Action.

DRAWINGS

The Official Draftsperson has not approved the Formal Drawings submitted by the Applicant. It is respectfully submitted that the drawings comply with the requirements of the USPTO. If the Official Draftsperson has any objections to the Formal Drawings he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned as soon as possible so that appropriate action may be taken. No further action is believed to be necessary at this time unless the undersigned receives a notice from the Official Draftsperson.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 18, 2004. An initialed copy of the PTO-1449 should be sent to the undersigned at the earliest convenience of the Examiner.

Favorable action on the present application is earnestly solicited.

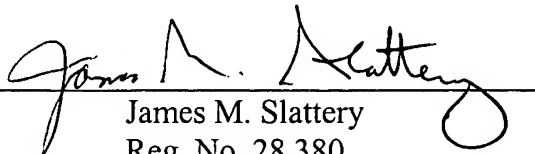
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Please charge any fees or credit any overpayment pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or
§1.17 to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

Respectfully submitted,

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